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THE LAUCHHEIMER TROPHY

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The Lauchheimer Trophy is named in honor of a man long identified with Marine Corps marksmanship, Brigadier General Charles H. Lauchheimer, Adjutant and Inspector of the Marine Corps at the time of his death on 14 January 1920. The trophy was first placed in competition the following year and has been awarded every year since, to the champion Marine Corps rifle and pistol shot, except for the period of World War II and 1951, during the Korean War, when no matches were held.(1)

The Lauchheimer family presented the trophy to the Marine Corps shortly after the general's death to commemorate his abiding interest in military marksmanship.(2) During the years 1899-1904, while he was Assistant Adjutant and Inspector at Headquarters Marine Corps, Lauchheimer also served as Inspector of Target Practice and devoted a large part of his attention to the construction and improvement of target ranges and the encouragement of wider participation by Marines in rifle and pistol competition.(3) Largely as a result of his efforts and the foundations that he laid, the Navy Department issued a general order on 28 April 1909, directing the holding of annual post, inter-post, division, and Marine Corps marksmanship matches.(4)

From the beginning, the basic regulations which established who may compete for the Lauchheimer Trophy have remained essentially the same. It is awarded to the Marine officer or enlisted man who attains the highest aggregate score in the individual rifle and pistol competition in the Marine Corps Matches. The current directive governing the conduct of small-arms marksmanship, Marine Corps Order 3591.2 of 25 January 1962, states that in order to qualify as a participant in the Marine Corps Matches, a competitor first must be awarded a rifle or pistol badge in one of the Division Matches conducted that same year. Competitors who thereby become eligible to compete in the Marine Corps Individual Rifle (or Pistol) Match may enter the Marine Corps Individual Pistol (or Rifle) Match to fire for a score to be considered in connection with the award of the Lauchheimer Trophy.(5) As evidence of winning the Trophy, which is kept at Headquarters Marine Corps except during the actual competition, the individual placing first has his name engraved on the Trophy and is given a gold medal and a letter of commendation by the Commandant. Silver and bronze medals are given to those placing second and third.(6)

Initially, in 1921, the course prescribed for the rifle was as follows:(7)

Stage	Range	Type	Time	Rounds	Tgt	Position
<u>1st</u>	300 yds	Slow	1 min/shot	10	A	Standing
	500 yds	Slow	1 min/shot	10	A	Sit/Kneel
	600 yds	Slow	1 min/shot	10	B	Prone
	200 yds	Rapid	1 min	10	D	Sit/Kneel
	300 yds	Rapid	1 min 10 sec	10	D	Prone
	500 yds	Rapid	1 min 20 sec	10	D	Prone
<u>2d</u>	Repeat	1st	Stage	60		
<u>3d</u>	1000 yds	Slow	1½ min/shot	10 (plus 2 sighting shots)	C	Prone
<u>4th</u>	Repeat	3d	Stage	10	C	Prone
Total Rounds				140		

The following course was prescribed for the pistol:(8)

Range	Type	Time	Rounds	Tgt
50 yds	Slow	30 sec per shot	14	"L"
75 yds	Slow	30 sec per shot	14	"L"
25 yds	Slow	30 sec per shot	14	"L"
50 yds	Rapid	30 sec per 7 rds	14	"L"
15 yds	Rapid	15 sec per 7 rds	14	"L"
25 yds	Quick	15 sec per 7 rds	14	"L"
Total Rounds			84	

While the basic conditions of the award have remained substantially unchanged since 1921, certain modifications have been made, from time to time, in the method of scoring. The most basic of these occurred in 1930 when, for the first time, the pistol was placed on a par with the rifle. Prior to that, the computation of winning scores had been done according to a weighted formula. As originally prescribed in 1921, the scoring

was arrived at by multiplying the rifle score by 71 and the pistol score by 29 and dividing the product by 100.⁽⁹⁾ This was revised in 1928 when the factor for the rifle became 42.9 and 57.1 for the pistol.⁽¹⁰⁾ Under the then prescribed courses, it was possible to score 800 points with the rifle and 600 points with the pistol. In 1930, the adoption of a new rifle course placed the rifle and the pistol on a par with 600 possible points each. The old method of multiplying the scores by a fixed number was discarded, and a system of scoring, still in use, came into being.⁽¹¹⁾ At the same time an elaborate scheme of breaking ties was prescribed favoring the rifle over the pistol.⁽¹²⁾ Although this particular formula has become obsolete, and has been deleted from the Marine Corps Manual since 1940, the priority of the rifle score has remained. This principle was invoked in the matches of 1956, when Sergeant Philip G. Gerdes and Major Richard J. Hardaway tied with 1100 points each out of a possible 1200. First place was awarded to Gerdes by virtue of his higher rifle score.⁽¹³⁾

Ties for second place have been more commonplace, occurring in 1930, 1935, 1938, 1953, and 1960. In each case, the higher rifle score earned the competitor second place and the silver medal. The problem of ties in the Lauchheimer Trophy competition has been resolved by a provision of Marine Corps Order 3591.2. It states that numerical ties will be decided in the following order: a. the greatest number of hits made in the V-ring and the bull's eye; b. the highest ranking total score in the rifle match; c. the highest ranking total score with the rifle at the longest range.⁽¹⁴⁾

Another category of change in the awarding of the Lauchheimer Trophy has involved the types of courses fired, although, with the exception of those effected in 1930, these changes have made no direct impact upon the method of scoring. To enumerate these in a brief account of the Lauchheimer Trophy would serve little useful purpose. Changes of this sort have not been peculiar to this particular trophy. An example of this type of change concerned the ten rounds slow fire at 500-yards which was prescribed for the rifle matches in 1930. This was dropped in 1956, and replaced by ten additional rounds of standing slow fire at 200-yards.

At the present time the course prescribed for the rifle is as follows: (15)

Range	Type	Time	Rounds	Tgt	Position
200 yds	Slow	20 min	20	A	Standing (off hand)
200 yds	Rapid	50 sec	10	A	Sitting (from standing)
300 yds	Rapid	60 sec	10	A	Prone (from standing)
600 yds	Slow	20 min	20	B	Prone
Total Rounds			60		

The course prescribed for the caliber .45 pistol is: (16)

Range	Type	Time	Rounds	Tgt
50 yds	Slow	10 min	10	50 yds
25 yds	Timed	20 sec per 5 rds	10	slow-fire
25 yds	Rapid	10 sec per 5 rds	10	25 yds
				timed & rapid
				25 yds
				timed & rapid
Total Rounds			30	

Both courses are fired twice.

There has been one other change in the Lauchheimer Trophy which has nothing to do with the conditions under which it is awarded but which is believed worthy of note. The Trophy originally consisted of a large unadorned wooden shield bearing in the center an oval bronze plaque showing a bas-relief of Marines in an assault with banners flying. Inscribed thereon is the name of the Trophy and its donor. Beneath are 14 small shields superimposed on the bronze plaque. Here were inscribed the names of the winners of the Trophy. The Trophy was, however, to be longer-lived than these 14 shields predicted. Thus, by 1935, space to show winners' names was exhausted, and in 1936, 24 similar shields were added. These circle the bronze plaque. (17)

Because Marine Corps Matches were not held during the period 1941-1945 and in 1951, there were no Lauchheimer Trophy winners in those years. As a result, extra shields will not have to be added to the plaque until after the 1964 award winner's name is inscribed.

Despite minor changes in the rules governing its award, the Lauchheimer Trophy has remained through the years the pre-eminent target for Marine shooters. Even the records achieved in the first six years of the awarding of the Trophy were auspicious for the future: Gunnery Sergeant John M. Thomas who placed first in the 1921 competition repeated his performance in 1922 and 1923, placed second in 1924 and 1925 and third in 1926. Surpassing this record is the one of Captain William W. McMillan, Jr., who has won a total of four gold medals (1955, 1959, 1961, and 1962), and one silver medal (1954). In winning the 1959, 1961, and 1962 awards, Captain McMillan recorded the three highest aggregate scores in the history of the Trophy.

A detailed account of competitions for the Lauchheimer Trophy as well as other Marine Corps rifle and pistol competitions may be found in The History of Marine Corps Competitive Marksmanship by Major Robert E. Barde, USMC. (18)

NOTES

- (1) Marine Corps General Order No. 2 (Series 1921), 12Jan21; see Appendix for winners and years of competition from the files of Decorations and Medals Branch, HQMC.
- (2) Leatherneck, v. 4, no. 14 (1Feb21), p. 1.
- (3) Folder "Lauchheimer, Charles W.," Biographical Files, Archives, HQMC; Annual Reports of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, 1899-1904, passim.
- (4) Annual Report of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, 1909, p. 1040.
- (5) Marine Corps Order 3591.2, dtd 25Jan62, enclosure 1, para. 2.5.
- (6) Marine Corps Order 3591.2, dtd 25Jan62, para. 6.h.(6).
- (7) Marine Corps Manual, 1921, paras. 508(1) and 530(19).
- (8) Ibid., paras. 508(2), (37), and (38).
- (9) Ibid., para. 530(47).
- (10) Marine Corps Manual, 1926, (ch. 3), para. 5-31.
- (11) Circular Letter No. 80 of 25Jan30; Director, Division of Operations and Training memo 2986 (AO-155-gs) to Major General Commandant, 12Jun30 (General File Folder 2400-30, No. 4, "Competitions--Matches," 1Apr30-30Jun31).
- (12) Marine Corps Manual, 1931, para. 5-31(3).
- (13) Parris Island Boot, v. 13, no. 24 (15 Jun 1956), p. 1.
- (14) Marine Corps Order 3591.2, dtd 25Jan62, encl. 1, para. 15.7.
- (15) Marine Corps Order 3591.2, dtd 25Jan62, encl. 1, para. 11.1.
- (16) Ibid., para. 11.2.
- (17) Director, Division of Operations and Training memo AO-130-jch to Major General Commandant, 4Aug36 (General File Folder 2465-25, 1932-1938).
- (18) Major Robert E. Barde, USMC. The History of Marine Corps Competitive Marksmanship (Washington: Marksmanship Branch, G-3 Div, HQMC, 1961).

Appendix

LAUCHHEIMER TROPHY MATCH WINNERS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Award</u>
1921	GySgt John M. Thomas	893.48	Gold
	1stLt W. J. Whaling	886	Silver
	GySgt T. A. Tieken	861	Bronze
1922	GySgt John M. Thomas	883.37	Gold
	Capt Joseph Jackson	880.65	Silver
	Cpl J. R. Tucker	876.33	Bronze
1923	GySgt John M. Thomas	999.312	Gold
	1stLt W. J. Whaling	976.226	Silver
	GySgt H. M. Bailey	969.498	Bronze
1924	1stLt Raymond T. Presnell	1010.228	Gold
	GySgt John M. Thomas	1001.992	Silver
	Sgt James R. Tucker	999.500	Bronze
1925	Capt Jacob Leinhard	1004.874	Gold
	GySgt John M. Thomas	1004.738	Silver
	Sgt J. Blakley	1004.026	Bronze
1926	Cpl Edward Russell	1011.518	Gold
	1stLt Raymond T. Presnell	1009.228	Silver
	GySgt John M. Thomas	1004.942	Bronze
1927	Sgt James R. Tucker	1020.84	Gold
	GySgt H. M. Bailey	1016.96	Silver
	1stLt Raymond T. Presnell	1009.32	Bronze
1928	Cpl Edward Russell	625.102	Gold
	Sgt James R. Tucker	624.099	Silver
	Sgt W. F. Pulver	616.679	Bronze
1929	1stLt Raymond T. Presnell	625.531	Gold
	1stLt W. J. Whaling	622.824	Silver
	Capt Jacob Leinhard	620.812	Bronze
1930	GySgt Henry M. Bailey	1082	Gold
	Cpl C. I. Laine	1061	Silver
	Sgt P. W. Lahme	1061	Bronze
1931	GySgt Morris Fisher	1083	Gold
	1stLt Raymond T. Presnell	1068	Silver
	Pvt Edward V. Seeser	1065	Bronze

1932	GySgt John Blakley	1076	Gold
	GySgt Henry M. Bailey	1063	Silver
	ChMarGun Henry Boschen	1061	Bronze
1933	GySgt Henry M. Bailey	1082	Gold
	Pvt Salvatore J. Bartlett	1078	Silver
	Capt Raymond T. Presnell	1059	Bronze
1934	Cpl Salvatore J. Bartlett	1049	Gold
	Sgt F. S. Hamrick	1048	Silver
	Pfc R. F. McMahill	1044	Bronze
1935	GySgt John Blakley	1072	Gold
	1stLt Ion M. Bethel	1060	Silver
	Pvt John G. Jones	1060	Bronze
1936	Cpl Robert E. Schneeman	1093	Gold
	2dLt David S. McDougal	1085	Silver
	Cpl John E. Heath	1081	Bronze
1937	Cpl William D. Linfoot	1108	Gold
	Cpl Albert N. Moore	1074	Silver
	Capt William W. Davidson	1072	Bronze
1938	Sgt Broox E. Clements	1110	Gold
	Sgt William D. Lindfoot	1108	Silver
	Sgt Thurman E. Barrier	1108	Bronze
1939	Sgt Robert E. Schneeman	1099	Gold
	Pfc Vito Perna	1093	Silver
	Sgt John E. Heath	1090	Bronze
1940	Pfc Mark W. Billing	1102	Gold
	Sgt Malcolm J. Holland	1084	Silver
	2dLt Noah J. Rodeheffer	1074	Bronze
1941- 1945	No competition		
1946	GySgt Theodore F. Wade	1088	Gold
	LtCol Noah J. Rodeheffer	1076	Silver
	GySgt Percy W. Hawes	1068	Bronze
1947	MSgt Walter E. Fletcher	1114	Gold
	WO Mark W. Billing	1098	Silver
	Capt Thurman E. Barrier	1097	Bronze
1948	MSgt Thomas R. Mitchell	1108	Gold
	TSgt Walter L. Devine	1107	Silver
	TSgt Fred H. Butcher, Jr.	1102	Bronze
1949	CWO Mark W. Billing	1110	Gold
	WO Armon J. Sealey	1109	Silver
	TSgt Walter L. Devine	1102	Bronze

1950	Capt John M. Jagoda	1116	Gold
	SSgt Joseph A. Jagiello	1112	Silver
	TSgt Alfonzo Jurado	1111	Bronze
1951	No competition		
1952	MSgt Jewell C. Palmer	1120	Gold
	2dLt Robert E. Martin	1104	Silver
	Capt Victor F. Brown	1100	Bronze
1953	2dLt Robert E. Martin	1108	Gold
	MSgt Virgil F. Miller	1106	Silver
	TSgt Charles R. Knapp	1106	Bronze
1954	1stLt Robert E. Martin	1120	Gold
	2dLt William W. McMillan, Jr.	1113	Silver
	1stLt Joe P. Taylor	1110	Bronze
1955	1stLt William W. McMillan, Jr.	1123	Gold
	1stLt Robert E. Martin	1101	Silver
	Capt Chester E. Reese	1092	Bronze
1956	Sgt Philip G. Gerdes	1100	Gold
	Maj Richard J. Hardaway (USMCR)	1100	Silver
	Capt Max L. Darling	1099	Bronze
1957	Capt Stanley Millar	1116	Gold
	Pfc Leslie M. Hunt	1115	Silver
	SSgt Edmond S. Sarver	1111	Bronze
1958	Maj Richard J. Hardaway (USMCR)	1130	Gold
	SSgt Donald D. Thorne	1128	Silver
	SSgt Anthony Mucci	1127	Bronze
1959	Capt William W. McMillan, Jr.	1169	Gold
	AMSgt "L" "J" Creech	1154	Silver
	1stLt James L. Roach	1147	Bronze
1960	ASgt L. M. Hunt	1147	Gold
	Capt H. W. Newton	1141	Silver
	1stSgt J. M. Kozak	1141	Bronze
1961	Capt William W. McMillan, Jr.	1167	Gold
	Sgt L. L. Hausman	1151	Silver
	Sgt A. Vitarbo	1148	Bronze
1962	Capt William W. McMillan, Jr.	1161	Gold
	MSgt R. C. Cox	1160	Silver
	WO Anthony Mucci	1158	Bronze

